

**Charter governing**  
***The European Schools Debating***  
***Championships***

## *Preambles*

### ***Definitions***

The **Tournament** refers to both a singular and all editions of the European Schools Debating Championships.

The **Host** refers to the (group of) person(s) or the legal entity that won the right to organise a single edition of the Tournament.

The **Tournament Council** (hereafter: the Council) refers to the voting body that determines the rules and direction of the Tournament. Member organisations of IDEA will each name a voting representative to the first Council. If not communicated differently, the IDEA member organisation's GA representative at the most recent GA is considered the organisation's voting representative at the Council.

The **Tournament Steering Committee** (hereafter: Committee) refers to the group of persons tasked to carry out the interests and specific tasks defined by the Council, this Charter, and IDEA.

Words importing one gender will include all genders, and the singular includes the plural and vice versa.

### ***Legal Status***

1. If not provided for in this text, the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands will apply.
2. Where this text is in contradiction with the laws of The Netherlands, the laws of The Netherlands take precedence.

### ***Relationship with IDEA***

1. The International Debate Education Association (hereafter: IDEA) is formally registered in The Netherlands as a *vereniging*, under KvK number 34123716.
2. IDEA will set up the first-ever EuroSDC Tournament Council meeting. Members of IDEA and other organisations will be invited to attend. This Council meeting will have as purpose to elect a Committee and identify the first Host.
3. The Charter recognises that EuroSDC takes place under the legal auspices of IDEA. Individual editions of the Tournament may take place under the legal auspices of the Host.
4. IDEA is the sole owner of tournament name, visual identity, and multimedia resources.

## *Articles of the Charter*

### Article 1 - the Tournament and its Goals

1. There will be a European Schools Debating Championships. The goals of the European Schools Debating Championships will be to:
  - 1.1. Cultivate excellence in debating in Europe, with a view to spreading a strong culture of high-quality debate;
  - 1.2. Make this tournament as accessible as possible to delegations of each country eligible to participate in this event.
2. The tournament will preferentially be held at a physical location with all participants. Where it is deemed necessary by Council, an online edition may take place instead.

### *The Tournament*

#### Article 2 - the Format

1. The format debated at EuroSDC is World Schools.
2. The tournament will be held in English.
3. Winners between two teams will be decided by a panel of qualified judges through conferral judging, where judges collaboratively seek to determine the winner. Judges may choose to split from the majority decision and award their ballot to the other team as part of the conferral procedure.

#### Article 3 - The Rules

1. The Council has the right to decide on Tournament Rules that detail:
  - a. The format,
  - b. Process of the tournament;
  - c. Tabbing procedures;
  - d. Code of Conduct;
  - e. Equity;
  - f. Language status;
  - g. Scholarship programmes.
2. Where this Charter or equivalent Tournament Rules are silent, the competition will follow equivalent rules as outlined by IDEA, and if these do not exist, the Worlds Schools Debating Championships as determined in its statutes, bylaws, and manuals.

#### Article 4 - Location and Duration

1. The Tournament will be hosted once per calendar year.
2. The Tournament will take place at a location of the Host's determination.
3. The Host will endeavour to host the Tournament in the months of February or March.

## Article 5 - Progression of the tournament

1. The tournament will take place over 3 days, excluding any days for travel for participants.
2. The tournament will feature six preliminary rounds in which all teams participate.
3. The number of teams which will advance to the elimination rounds is determined by the Host in consultation with the Chief Adjudicators.
4. The breaking order of teams will be determined by the following criteria and in this order:
  - (a) the number of wins;
  - (b) the number of ballots;
  - (c) the average of speaker points per team;
  - (d) the average of speaker points per team, excluding the highest and lowest-scored rounds.
5. Provided that the Council decides so, a break to the Novice Final can be held during a specific edition of the tournament. Teams and speakers need to meet the following conditions to be eligible as Novice speakers and/or teams:
  - 5.1. In order to qualify as a Novice speaker, a speaker needs to have started debating in the concurrent or previous school year to the EuroSDC edition they are debating at.
  - 5.2. To qualify as a Novice team, all speakers must meet the criteria for Novice speakers.
6. In the preliminary prepared rounds 2 different motions will be debated, with teams debating each side of each motion once. The rest of the preliminary and elimination rounds will be debated impromptu, with motions announced 60 minutes ahead of the round.
7. All rounds will be open.
8. The oral adjudication and feedback will be delivered by adjudicators as soon as possible after reaching the decision and providing ballots to the tabulation team. Exceptions to this rule can be made in the case of logistical reasons outlined by the Host.

## Article 6 - Allocation of teams during preliminary rounds

1. Teams will be paired randomly in the first preliminary round.
2. Subsequent rounds will be power-paired, with teams meeting teams with the same number of wins/same bracket.
3. Where the number of teams with the same number of wins is an odd number, a team may be “pulled up” from the bracket immediately below them. The team drawn from the bracket below will be randomly selected from that bracket. If the team has already had a ‘pull-up’ in an earlier round, precedence will be given to another randomly selected team from that bracket. If no teams without a pull-up exist in a bracket, a team can be selected from the next bracket below, until a team with no pull-up can be identified.
4. To the extent possible, teams will be allocated to sides Proposition and Opposition three times each during the preliminary rounds. If this means that teams cannot be paired in the same bracket, then reducing the number of pull-ups takes precedence over ensuring the equal distribution of sides. This rule can be overruled by a joint decision of the CAP and TAB.

### Article 7 - Progression of teams through the elimination rounds

1. Where, as per Article 5, the first elimination round are quarter finals, the ranked teams will meet as follows:
  - a. In the Quarter Finals:
    - QF1: 1<sup>st</sup> vs 8<sup>th</sup>
    - QF2: 2<sup>nd</sup> vs 7<sup>th</sup>
    - QF3: 3<sup>rd</sup> vs 6<sup>th</sup>
    - QF4: 4<sup>th</sup> vs 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. In the semi-finals
    - QF1 winner vs QF4 winner
    - QF2 winner vs QF3 winner.
2. Where, as per Article 5, the first elimination round are the semi finals, the ranked teams will meet as follows:
  - SF1: 1st vs 4<sup>th</sup>
  - SF2: 2nd vs 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Article 8 - Awards

1. The Tournament will award at least:
  - a. Acknowledgement for the winning team of the Grand Finals;
  - b. Acknowledgement for the best individual speaker after the preliminary rounds;
  - c. Acknowledgement for the best team whose members are recognised as having English as Foreign Language status;
  - d. Acknowledgement for the best individual speaker who is recognised as having English as Foreign Language status;
  - e. If applicable, acknowledgement for the winning team of the Novice Final.

### *The Council*

### Article 9 - The Tournament Council

1. The Tournament Council will be made up of one representative from each participating nation at the most recent edition of the tournament.
2. The role of the Council is to oversee that the Tournament is conducted in line with the aims of this Charter.
3. The Council has the rights to make any other decisions that are needed to further the aims outlined in this Charter using the powers as outlined in this Charter.

### Article 10 - Voting power

1. Each participating nation has the right to cast one vote at Council.
2. Unless otherwise specified in this document, decisions will be made by a simple majority of votes cast.
3. Decisions can only be made if quorum is reached. Quorum is defined as the presence of representatives of at least half of all voting members.

### Article 11 - Member status

1. Nations who have participated at the most recent edition of the tournament will be considered voting members and have the right to vote as members of the Council.
2. Nations who have registered for the upcoming edition of the Tournament will be considered observing members, and have the right to participate but not vote in the Council.
3. For the first-ever edition, nations who have successfully registered for the first-ever edition of the Tournament will be immediately regarded as voting members.

### Article 12 - Convening the Council

1. The Council will convene as often as it or the Committee deems necessary to further the aims as laid out in this Charter, including:
  - a. The Council will convene within a reasonable time after registration is closed and before the tournament takes place if it needs to decide on matters of eligibility or suspension;
  - b. The Council will at a minimum convene within a reasonable time to decide on the next Host to give the Host adequate time to prepare for the hosting of the next edition of the Tournament.
2. Additional meetings of the Council can be initiated by:
  - a. A communication by the Committee, with at least six weeks' notice, sent out to all voting members;
  - b. A communication supported by at least half of the voting members, sent out to all voting members and the Committee, with at least six weeks' notice;
  - c. A communication by at least two-thirds of voting members, or the Committee and at least half of voting members, with at least two weeks' notice, for matters deemed urgent by these voting members.
3. The Council can meet online or physically. The Committee will make adequate preparations for an orderly conduct for the meeting and voting.

## *The Committee*

### Article 13 - Establishing the Committee

1. The Tournament Committee will be comprised of up to 7 members.
2. The first order of business on the first-ever meeting of the Council will be to vote in Committee members.
3. Up to 4 members of the Committee are voted in by the Council.
4. Up to 3 members of the Committee are appointed by the IDEA Board of Directors.
5. Committee members are each appointed for a mandate of 24 months and are able to run again for their position.

### Article 14 - Committee Selection by the Council

1. The Committee determines the numbers of open seats to be voted on by the Council.
2. Each member of the Council will get as many votes as there are open seats and can only cast one vote per candidate.
3. Candidates are elected if they receive a simple majority of votes cast. In case more candidates meet the threshold than there are open seats, the candidate(s) with the highest number of votes are elected.
4. Candidates need to announce their candidacy in writing before the Council convenes and attach a CV and motivation letter. Candidates need to be supported by at least two voting members who are not part of the organisation that the candidate is affiliated with.
5. Committee members cannot assume the role of team coaches for the duration of their Committee mandate.

#### Article 15 - Committee Composition

1. The Committee will appoint one of its members as the President of the Committee. The President's role is to steer the Committee and represent the Committee at Council meetings.
2. All other roles of the Committee will be internally distributed between Committee members.

#### Article 16 - Role of the Committee

1. The Committee represents and furthers the interests of Council, the Tournament and IDEA.
2. The Committee can set up and delegate tasks to Working Groups.
3. The Committee keeps records of Council Minutes, documents, and the history of the Tournament.
4. The Committee calls Council meetings and sets the Agenda. Members can request points to be added to the Agenda up to one week before the next Council meeting.
5. The Committee monitors the process of organising editions of the Tournament.
6. The Committee liaises with the Executive Office of IDEA, where necessary.
- 7.

### *The Host and Bidding Process*

#### Article 17 - The Host

1. There will be a Host appointed for every edition of the Tournament.
2. The responsibility of the Host is to organise the Tournament in line with the goals set out by this Charter.
3. The Host will designate at least one Convenor, who will be chiefly responsible for organising the Tournament and representing the Host in communication with the Council and the Committee.

### Article 18 - The right to host

1. Prospective Hosts can offer a bid for the right to host to the Council.
2. The Council will make arrangements to award the right to host an edition of the Tournament a minimum of eighteen months before the prospective date of the next Tournament.
3. The right to host can be won by a majority of votes cast during a Council meeting.
4. In case more than two prospective Hosts bid, the Council will vote using a ranked vote system. Each voting member ranks their preferred Host. The prospective Host with the least total votes awarded is eliminated, with the second preferences of their votes obtained moving to another prospective Host. This process is repeated until a prospective Host reaches a majority of votes cast.
5. The Host and IDEA will sign a contract determining rules, tournament-related responsibilities and any specific legal responsibilities of both parties.

### Article 19 - Requirements and support to Host

1. Each prospective Host must prepare a written bid document and submit it to the Committee at least one month before the appropriate Council meeting. The document needs to include:
  - a. an overview of the chosen accommodation site, including prospective prices, preferably with offers received from vendors;
  - b. an overview of venues used for the preliminary and elimination rounds, including prospective prices, preferably with offers received from vendors;
  - c. an overview of catering options used for the event, where the event caters for at least three meals during the three full days of the competition, including prospective prices, preferably with offers received from vendors;
  - d. a prospective total budget for the event;
  - e. an overview of prospective travel routes and costs for at least the participating nations at the most recent edition of the Tournament as well as the two potentially eligible countries geographically most removed from the prospective Host;
  - f. a prospective cap on the total number of teams able to participate;
  - g. an indicative registration fee per participant, from which it is only allowed to deviate upwards after winning the right to Host by seeking permission from the Committee;
  - h. possible scholarship programmes for low-income participants;
  - i. indicative sources of revenue other than registration fees;
  - j. at least one and maximum two Chief Adjudicators.
2. Prospective Hosts should be able to guarantee a minimum capacity for 20 teams or a minimum of 1 team per nation for the number of nations present at the latest Tournament, whichever number is higher.
3. IDEA will support all Host organisations in terms of the administrative, logistic and financial burden within IDEA's capacity.



### Article 20 - Withdrawing the right to Bid

1. The Committee can decide to withdraw the right to Host if it deems, after investigation, that there are serious concerns as to the feasibility of the Host organising a successful Tournament.
2. The Host can decide to withdraw from hosting if it deems that it is unable to organise a successful edition of the Tournament, in which case the Committee will make arrangements to find a suitable alternative Host.

### Article 21 - Monitoring of the Host

1. The Committee may, at any time, make requests to obtain information from the Host to monitor the process of organising the tournament. The Host will respond proactively to such requests.

### Article 22 - Reporting

1. At the first Council meeting after the end of the Tournament hosted, the Host will provide a narrative report of the event and a finalised budget. These reports will include an overview of any differences between the Bid Document and the Tournament.

## *Personnel*

### Article 23 - Chief Adjudicators

1. There will be at least one Chief Adjudicator.
2. The tasks of the Chief Adjudicators will include:
  - a. Setting motions for the competition;
  - b. Where necessary, setting the draw of teams and adjudicators for each round of the Tournament in cooperation with the Tab master(s);
  - c. Selecting and training adjudicators prior to and during the Tournament.
3. The Chief Adjudicator can choose to select assistant Chief Adjudicators to assist them in their tasks in a process that they best choose fit.

### Article 24 - Tabulation

1. The Host will appoint at least one Tab master.
2. The tasks of the Tab master will include:
  - a. Assisting the Chief Adjudicators in setting the draw of teams and adjudicators for each round of the Tournament, using appropriate software that can handle power pairing;
  - b. Monitoring and checking the results from round to round;
  - c. Checking and publishing the results of the tournament after the conclusion of the Grand Final in a timely manner.
3. The Tab master will be appointed by the Host.

### Article 25 - Equity matters

1. The Host will appoint at least two Equity Officers.
2. The task of the Equity Officers is to ensure that the Code of Conduct and Equity Policy is followed during the Tournament.
3. In case of gross violations of the Code of Conduct and/or Equity Policy, the Equity Officers will refer to the Committee to take up the matter.

### Article 26 - Language Officer

1. The Host will appoint at least one Language Officer.
2. The task of the Language Officer is to certify the language status of participants at the Tournament.

## *Eligibility*

### Article 27 - Eligibility to participate

1. All sovereign nations that are members of the Council of Europe, as well as Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, are automatically eligible to participate in the tournament.
  - 1.1. England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Kosovo are recognised as separate eligible countries, in line with the historical standards in the debating community.
2. Countries that do not fit the above criteria, have sovereign representation at the United Nations or are a non-member observer State, and cannot participate in a regional competition of equivalent stature, can apply to participate in this competition and will be allowed to do so subject to a 2/3rd majority vote by the Tournament Council.
  - 2.1. If a regional competition of equivalent stature is set up that this country is eligible to participate in, the right to participate at EuroSDC is voided.

### Article 28 - Sending organisations

1. One organisation per nation will be allowed to send a team representing the nation in question.
2. Where a national debate body or equivalent exists, that organisation will be prioritised over other prospective sending organisations from that nation.
3. Where disagreement exists over the identity of the most appropriate national debate body, the Committee will make an initial decision which will be finally determined by Council.
4. For the first-ever edition of the Tournament, the eligibility status of the sending organisation will be determined by the Committee.

### Article 29 - Eligible individual participants

1. Debaters at the event must be enrolled in a secondary level education institution at the first day of the Tournament or be at or under the age of 18 and not be pursuing a tertiary education qualification at the time that the event takes place.
2. Where disagreements exist on the eligibility of a debater, the Committee may pursue an investigation to determine if the eligibility criteria are met.

### Article 30 - Language Status

1. The tournament will recognise speakers and teams who face obstacles due to their level in fluency in English with the English as Foreign Language status.
2. Further provisions on what qualifies this status will be made in a Tournament Rules document.

### Article 31 - Team Composition

1. Teams will compromise of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 speakers.

### Article 32 - Number of teams

1. Each nation may register a second team to participate in the Tournament. If the Host cannot accommodate all second teams that register, second teams will be randomly sorted in a bracket, with top-placed teams being invited until the team cap is reached. Nations who have had a second team at any of the previous two editions of the Championship and who requested a second team will have this team placed in a lower bracket. This bracket will be randomly sorted, with top-placed teams being invited until the team cap is reached.
2. If teams drop out prior to the competition, the Host may offer a spot to the next team in the bracket.

### Article 33 - Judges and Coaches

1. Each Nation is allowed to bring 1 coach per team.
2. Each Nation is required to bring 1 judge per team.
3. Coaches and Judges need to be 18 years or older.
4. Each Nation should bring a minimum of two people who are 18 years or older, are not a member of the team, have finished their secondary school education, and serve one of the above functions.

### Article 34 - Suspension of participation

1. Countries or organisations may have their right to participate at an upcoming edition be revoked for a reason the Council deems major, by a 2/3rd majority vote by Council.
2. Such a suspension will automatically last for one edition and then lapse and can be renewed by a 2/3rd majority vote by Council.

## *Amending this Charter*

### Article 35 - Amendments

1. A proposal to amend this charter can be brought by the Committee or a voting member of the Council.
2. Such a proposal needs to pass by a simple majority of all votes cast in Council, unless the amendment concerns an article that is governed by a 2/3rd majority of votes in which case a 2/3rd majority of votes applies.